

Remarks

In the outstanding Official Action, the Examiner:

(1) rejected claims 1-24 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention; and

(2) rejected claim 24 (read: claim "22"?) under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Nishio (U.S. Patent No. 4,841,519).

In response to Item 2 above, Applicants respectfully believe that the Examiner intended to reject claim 22 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Nishio, but accidentally wrote claim "24". Applicants base this belief on the Examiner's language describing the basis of the 102(b) rejection and also on the Examiner's language contained in paragraph 5. Furthermore, while Applicants disagree with the substance of the Examiner's 102(b) rejection, in order to expedite allowance of the application, Applicants have canceled claim 22 without prejudice and subject to the right to prosecute all canceled subject matter in related applications. Cancelling of claim 22 is believed to render the 102(b) rejection moot.

In response to Item 1 above, Applicants have now amended claims 1, 3-8, 12-16, 18-20, 23 and 24 in order to more clearly define the present invention. More particularly, Applicants have modified the claims so as to eliminate use of the terms "partially" and "substantially", and so as to improve the grammar. Accordingly, Applicants believe that the amendments to claims 1, 3-8, 12-16, 18-20, 23 and 24 eliminate the basis of the 112 rejection.

On account of the foregoing, Applicants submit that claims 1-21, 23 and 24 are now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early and favorable reconsideration is respectfully solicited.

In the event that any additional fees may be required in this matter, please charge the same, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 16-0221.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

*Mark J. Pandiscio* 1/29/07

Mark J. Pandiscio

Registration No. 30,883

Pandiscio & Pandiscio, P.C.

470 Totten Pond Road

Waltham, MA 02451-1914

Tel. No.: (781) 290-0060

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